

## German General's Memoirs Call Bormann a Spy for the Soviet

By HENRY RAYMONT

A manuscript described as the memoirs of Gen. Reinhard Gehlen, former head of the West German intelligence service, asserts that Martin Bormann, Hitler's top lieutenant, was a Soviet agent during World War II.

It also says that after the war Bormann became an adviser on German policy in the Soviet Union and that he died there less than three years ago.

These assertions about the Nazi leader who was last seen leaving Hitler's bunker in Berlin in 1945, are contained in a forthcoming book that General Gehlen is said to have written since his retirement in 1968.

The book is reported to be commanding offers approaching \$1-million for world publication rights, following at least six months of secret negotiations that in themselves resemble an episode of international intrigue.

The memoirs discount previous accounts of Bormann's fate, which presumed him either to have died outside Hitler's bunker in Berlin or to be hiding in South America.

In fact, the memoirs say, as the Russians closed in on the bunker, the Nazi leader crossed their lines and gained sanctuary in the Soviet Union. The information is attributed to a series of "unimpeachable" reports, presumably from General Gehlen's agents in the Soviet Union. The last report, which brought word of the death, came in 1969.

The account of Bormann's double role is one of many details of East-West intrigue in the reminiscences of General Gehlen, who was chief intelligence officer of the Wehrmacht on the Russian front and was recruited after the war by United States intelligence. He eventually became director of the Bundes-Nachrichten-Dienst, West Germany's secret service.

The existence of the memoirs—and negotiations for their sale by a small West German publishing house—became known here during the last few days as an outline and portions of the text were obtained from several publishing sources.

An announcement is expected this week that bids for the world rights to the manuscript outside Germany have been made by the World Publishing Company, a subsidiary of the Times Mirror Company of Los Angeles, and Avon Books, a paperback publisher owned by the Hearst Corporation. The publishing house of William Collins of London is also known to have offered \$100,000 for the

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The announcement would be the first public acknowledgment of the existence of the Gehlen memoirs and the negotiations, which have included secret trips by United States and British publishers to Germany and an almost clandestine typesetting operation by the conservative Hamburg newspaper *Die Welt*, which plans to begin serializing the book on Sept. 10.



Camera Press-Pix  
Reinhard Gehlen, former West German intelligence chief, in World War II.

According to information assembled from publishers here

and in West Germany, the Gehlen memoirs were first offered for sale early this year by Volker Hansen, director of Hass & Koehler, a small, 182-year-old publishing house in Mainz, known for books on military subjects. Mr. Hansen, whose father was a German intelligence officer during World

War II, said he held power of attorney for General Gehlen.

Over the last three months

several United States and British publishers went to Mainz,

where they were allowed to see

as many as three chapters of

the 12-chapter manuscript. Re-

quests to visit General Gehlen

at his home in Bavaria were

turned down on the ground that

he wished to remain secluded

during the negotiations. How-

ever, the publishers were told

the general intended to make

public appearances to promote

the book after its publication.

Mr. Hansen's refusal to dis-

close the full text combined

with the unavailability of its

author led to some speculation

about whether the memoirs had

actually been written by Gen-

eral Gehlen.

But publishing sources, both

here and in West Germany, as-

sert that they have confirmed

the reliability of the material

through people close to the in-

telligence community of both

countries.

Martin P. Levin, chairman of

the board of World Publishing,

said: "We are totally con-

vinced that the memoirs are

authentic. We are equally con-

vinced that they will create an

international sensation."

Mr. Levin said the authen-

ticity of the manuscript had

been verified by Peter Ritner,

World's chief editor, with the

help of Georg Balley, an author

formerly connected with United

States military intelligence. In

Germany, when the two men

visited Mainz late last month.

Two years ago, Mr. Ritner, then working for the Macmillan Company, was the editor of Albert Speer's "Inside the Third Reich," a best seller that is said to have contributed to General Gehlen's decision to issue his own memoirs.

The report that the general wrote a book was especially surprising because of his legendary record of anonymity. For years he shunned interviews and public statements despite a reputation as the man who built West Germany's intelligence apparatus into the world's most effective anti-Communist espionage network.

General Gehlen, who made his reputation as an analyst of Soviet strategy on the Russian front, went underground as the war ended to surrender with his entire staff to Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army with an offer to cooperate with the victors.

In 1947, the newly created Central Intelligence Agency authorized him to establish a full-scale German intelligence organization, which he staffed largely with professionals from the disbanded S.S. security service and the Wehrmacht intelligence agencies.

People who say they are familiar with the 69-year-old general's thinking say fear of reprisals against his family and a distaste to have his views used in internal West German political controversies explain his continued reluctance to receive visitors.

If this has indeed been General Gehlen's attitude, information about the manuscript that became available in recent days indicates a drastic change. For in addition to describing wartime and later intelligence operations, it contains a detailed analysis of Soviet political and military goals for the next two decades as well as an urgent plea for a Western military buildup to contain Communist expansion.

The argument for a tougher policy of containment suggests that the publication of the memoirs is certain to be welcomed by the foes of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik, his policy to improve relations with the Soviet bloc.

This is the reason given by German publishing sources why the German newspaper serial rights were acquired by *Die Welt*, whose owner, Axel Springer, is an influential critic of the Brandt government. *Die Welt* is reported to have paid \$250,000 for the serial rights.

Rüdiger Freiherr von Wechmar, Chancellor Brandt's spokesman, said in an interview from Bonn yesterday that the Government had not been aware of the impending serialization of the Gehlen memoirs. However, he said that high officials had known about the existence of "an alleged Gehlen manuscript" and were investigating whether there had been any violation of laws restraining former civil servants from revealing state secrets.

The plan to rush the manuscript into print coincided with the publication of a critical Gehlen biography written by Heinz Höhne, an editor of the Hamburg weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel*, which supports Chancellor Brandt. The Höhne book will be issued in Germany on Sept. 19, and an English translation is to be published here next year by Coward, McCann, Geoghegan.

In offering the book by Gehlen to prospective foreign publishers, Mr. Hansen is understood to have made the point that neither Mr. Höhne nor the author of another forthcoming Gehlen biography, E. H. Cookridge, have interviewed the former intelligence chief nor seen his memoirs.

A portion of the text of the memoirs, including the account of the Bormann case, was distributed by Mr. Hansen as evidence that General Gehlen's book would contain important and hitherto unpublished materials.

The memoirs say that the revelations about Bormann, the man Hitler named as his successor, "offer the key to one of the most enigmatic cases of our century."

The author says that he first heard suspicions voiced about Bormann in a private conversation in 1941 with Adm. Wilhelm Canaris, head of the Nazi counter-espionage service, who was executed for his role in the July, 1944, plot to assassinate Hitler.

According to the memoirs, although Bormann was believed to have ties to Die Rote Kapelle, a famous Soviet espionage cell in Nazi Germany, the Nazi leader was never placed under surveillance for fear that he would use his influence with Hitler to destroy the intelligence service.